who, in the earlier ages of the church, were all clergy having minor orders; priests or deacons did not perform this portion of the divine service, for to them were the higher mysteries reserved. We apply the term *chancel* to the portion of the church enclosed by the *cancelli*. The Germans give the name of *Kanzell* to the pulpit standing on the *cancelli*, and all the languages of Europe the title of Chancellor, or *Cancellarius*, to the successor of the *officer* who stood within the *cancelli*. In this example we are able to trace each derivation to its source, the channels are yet visible through which the ideas have flowed. But how useless must be our conjectures when the channels are filled up! Hence the imperfection of all histories of language.

The high altar, the only Communion Table —for the primitive Church was a stranger to the multiplicity of the modern Romish ritual —stood within the santuary, more or less advanced towards the choir. Causes which it is not necessary here to enumerate, might occasion some slight changes in its position, but it was always free and isolated, surmounted by its tabernacle, or baldachino, and detached from the wall.

Lastly, the Sanctuary was terminated by the *Apsis*, sometimes called the *Exedra* or *Bema*. Here sat the archbishop or bishop—his chair, or throne, in the centre—the seats of his suffragans and presbyters around. This division of the building was considered, so to speak, as its crown. Protected, like the choir, by cancelli, no layman could enter its precincts; rich curtains shrouded its recesses from the sight of the congregation, until the completion of the Eucharistic consecration.*

Whilst the exterior of the Basilica was naked and simple, almost to poverty, the interior exhibited the utmost splendour which could then be effected by all the resources of art. The roof was invariably composed of wood. In the churches built by Constantine, and some other of the earlier churches, it is said that the beams and rafters were concealed by a flat ceiling of gilt panels. We doubt much, however, whether this assertion, grounded upon the very obscure text of Eusebius, be correct. We should rather suppose that the enrichments consisted of gilding, or colouring, applied to the beams themselves, as is the case at San' Miniato, one of the most curious and interesting objects which Firenze la bella affords. At all events, there is no one early, or even mediæval, specimen of a flat ceiling at Rome; the panelings all having been added at comparatively modern periods. On the whole, the concealment of the beams has not been an improvement. Those who recollect the north transept of Winchester Cathedral before the masquerading and destruction effected by the 'refined taste' of poor Dr. Nott, will agree with us in deeply lamenting the loss of the tranquil and stern simplicity of the ancient open roof—the dark beams, solid in their strength, and the apex of the concave losing itself in darkness."

After some remarks on mosaics, the most characteristic decoration of the basilica, and on the absence of sculpture in the structures of the ancient Catholic church, some of the principal basilicæ of Rome are described and illustrated by plans and sections, including old St. Peter's, the memory of which is almost effaced by the modern marvel.

'GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL TO ERECT THREE NEW COLLEGES IN IRELAND.—Sir James Graham during the past week, in explaining the views of Government with respect to academical education in Ireland, recommended the establishment of three colleges for the cultivation of literature and arts; one in the north, another in the west, and the third in the south. The building of each college he estimated at 30,000*l.*, or in round numbers 100,000*l.* for the three. He further recommended, as localities for the proposed erections, 1, Derry or Belfast; 2, Galway or Limerick; 3, Cork.

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* For details let the reader consult Bingham. Many years ago (vol. xxvii., p. 329) we pointed out the utility of the old-fashioned parson of Ewant, as a guide to Christian archæology. No book, either here or abroad, has yet appeared, which can supersede his *Origines*, which should be found in every clergyman's library. The general form of the Basilica has been adopted with great skill in the building of Hungerford Market. The shops, which have recently been built up in it, now unluckily spoil the perspective, comfort having been preferred to picturesque beauty. But the whole is strikingly *Roman*, and will afford useful hints to the ecclesiastical architect.

FALSE HERALDRY ON THE NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

A WRITER in the *Art-Union* of the present month, has drawn attention to a number of asserted heraldic blunders which appear on the exterior of the new Houses of Parliament. He states that many of the shields are charged with devices copied from coins of various sovereigns which were never intended to represent arms, and that it would be as reasonable to take St. George and the Dragon for the arms of George IV., as to adopt those devices for the arms of the monarch on whose coinage they appear. He points out too, amongst other objections, that supporters have been assigned to every sovereign, beginning with the Conqueror, though it is known that supporters were not used by the kings of England till the reign of Richard II., three hundred years after the Conquest.

We have so much confidence in the ability and caution of Mr. Barry, that we feel little doubt he will be able to explain away the apparent mistakes; if, however, by oversight the heraldic adornments have been left to those who were not competent to the task, and errors have been committed, they should be immediately corrected to the utmost possible extent. Heraldry is very closely connected with architecture, and we hold that, when employed, the most scrupulous accuracy should be observed.

A morning paper estimates that the Houses of Parliament will be at least twenty years more in hand; and adds that such an opinion is strengthened by the arguments of Mr. Barry himself, who, in justifying the small progress at present made when the peers complained of his delay, said, "The time it will take to complete even the architectural portion *cannot be exactly specified.*" In looking at the time that the erection of other edifices of extraordinary magnitude and splendour occupied, it will be found that it was sometimes the work of centuries. St. Peter's, at Rome, took a century and a half to complete; Milan cathedral twice as long. The most pertinent comparison is St. Paul's, because it is both nearer to our own day, and was the work of one architect throughout; there was no material interruption to its progress, yet it took thirty-five years to complete (1675—1710); and whereas its cubic contents are 11,000,000 nf feet, those of the palace of Westminster are estimated at 16,000,000 of cubic feet—half as much again.

SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION AND DESCRIPTION OF FRENCH HISTORICAL MONUMENTS.

THE congress of the Society for the preservation and description of French Historical Monuments is fixed to take place at Lille, on the 3rd of June, and the seven or eight succeeding days. Dr. Bromet has obligingly forwarded to us a list of the questions immediately relating to architectural antiquities to be discussed at the meeting, to which we gladly give circulation. We hope that some of our readers may be induced to attend. Part of the time will be spent at Tournay, one of the most interesting towns in Belgium, and very close to Lille.

1. With respect to monuments of the middle ages, is there any remarkable difference between the architecture of the north of France and that of the south of Belgium, or of the seventeen Belgic provinces; and have the architectonic types of East and West Flanders, Hainault, the Cambresis, and Artois, been borrowed from France, or from the great monuments of the most northern of these provinces, or from Germany? And what are the differences and the analogies of other contemporary works of art in those countries?

2. As it does not appear that either in French Flanders, or French Hainault, or the Cambresis were ever any such vast basilical churches with statuary fronts as still exist in the countries adjacent to them, it is desirable to seek the cause of this almost total absence of statuary decoration, which renders the study of Iconography in the provinces abovenamed so difficult.

3. It being generally thought that the new styles of Gothic architecture were but slowly adopted in French Flanders,—can this opinion be supported by any monuments of well attested date, which were constructed according to the styles of periods which preceded their erection?

4. As several religious edifices without any thing remarkable in their architecture, contain very interesting pulpits, stalls, confessionals, reliquaries, tabernacles, shrines, fonts, processional crosses, and bas-reliefs, &c., a description of such objects may enable the congress to ascertain the state of the fine arts in those provinces now under consideration, during the middle ages.

5. Does it appear that Spanish manners exercised any influence on the architecture of Flanders and Artois? Were all the buildings attributed to the Spaniards, such as belfries and town-halls, &c. really constructed by them, and what are the peculiarities of that architecture of which the towns of Lille and Arras afford so many examples.

6. Can it be proved that any Romanesque churches with large courts before them ever existed in the northern provinces of ancient Gaul?

7. Are there in other parts of ancient Gaul any churches of Romanesque architecture, which have never had any other than flat ceilings of wood?

8. Are there any existing apsidal ends or other parts of Romanesque churches of octagonal form?

9. Are there any specimens of pointed vaulting put up after the completion of edifices of pure Romanesque style?

10. What churches are there of a transitional epoch from the semi-circular to the pointed styles, which are exteriorly Romanesque, and interiorly pointed? and, where such exist, has not the interior been added when a vaulted ceiling may have been put up?

11. How, in the north of France, during the above-named epoch, are the two architectural styles generally combined?

12. Did the several people of Germanic origin similarly adopt the different changes in architectural style?

13. Are there any crypts under the churches of Belgium and the northern provinces of France in those styles prevalent from the eleventh to the sixteenth centuries.

14. What was the ancient destination of crypts, or subterranean churches, and what peculiar ceremonies were therein celebrated?

15. To what epoch may we refer the introduction of zodiacal signs in monuments consecrated to Christian worship, and are they frequently employed on their walls or pavements in the north?

16. Are there any church pavements formed of stones sculptured in low relief, having in their cavities a coloured cement?

17. Are there any mosaic pavements in churches of the pointed style?

18. What examples are there of that peculiar kind of pavement called labyrinths, or roads to Jerusalem, sometimes seen in the pavements of middle-age buildings? and to what epoch may we refer their introduction?

19. How happens it that there are so many large religious edifices of the first and second styles of pointed architecture still existing in those provinces on this side of the river Loire, formerly called the county of the Langue d'oïl, compared to the small number of religious edifices of the same epochs in the provinces south of the Loire, and which is called the country of the Langue d'oc?

20. Do Belgium and the northern provinces of France afford any examples of Romanesque churches paved with glass?

Gentlemen proposing to attend the discussion of the above-stated questions are cordially invited by the authorities of Lille to its grand "Fêtes Patronales," which will take place on the first, second, and third days of June, and during which there will be several opportunities of observing the ancient manners and usages of Flanders, as exhibited at its "Kermesses" and other assemblies. The admission card to the Congress, which costs but ten francs, including the privilege of partaking of a banquet to be given by the city of Tournay, may be procured on arrival at Lille from Mons. de Contenein, to whom, or to M. de Caumont, the director of the society, Dr. Bromet, will be happy to make known any person who may be desirous of joining him at Lille, and which by steam to Ostend, and thence by railroad, may be reached from London in sixteen or eighteen hours.

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